APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR AMERICORPS EDUCATION AWARD ONLY GRANTS

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AMERICORPS EDUCATION AWARD ONLY GRANTS

Use these instructions if you are applying for AmeriCorps funding through the AmeriCorps Education Award Only Grants pool. The AmeriCorps Education Award Only Grant provides organizations with education awards for individuals who the program enrolls as AmeriCorps members to complete a set number of hours over the course of a year. AmeriCorps Education Award Only Grants provide nominal funds (not to exceed $400 per member service year) to offset program management and operating expenses. This grant does **NOT** provide financial resources for living allowances and other member benefits, member supervision and program management costs, supplies and equipment, travel expenses, evaluation costs, etc. The AmeriCorps Education Award Only Grants do **NOT** have a match requirement. *(Do not use these instructions if you are applying for AmeriCorps funding through the AmeriCorps Program Operating Grants pool, which provides both operating funding AND education awards, and requires a significant match. Use the Application Instructions for AmeriCorps Program Operating Grants.)*

To obtain or submit your application, please visit www.americorps.gov/egrants to access eGrants. Application instructions are available at www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/funding . Application instructions also can be obtained by contacting the Colorado Commission. Applications are to be submitted using eGrants, the Corporation's integrated, secure, web-based system for applications.

Complete applications must be ***received*** by the Governor's Commission on Community Service **by 5:00 p.m. on January 4, 2006** via eGrants**.**

In addition to completing an online application, applicants must submit, in hard copy, all attachments specified in this guidance. Please include a copy of the 424 Facesheet with your attachments for identification purposes. Submit required attachments to: Governor's Commission on Community Service, 1059 Alton Way, Suite 253, Denver, 80230.

Tips for the eGrants application process:
- Prepare and save your application as a word processing document prior to inputting it into eGrants, then copy and paste the document into eGrants.
- We strongly encourage you to create your eGrants account and begin your application at least three weeks prior to the final submission deadline and begin pasting your application into eGrants no later than 24 hours before the deadline.
- If you encounter technical difficulties using eGrants, contact the eGrants Help Desk at 888-677-7849 or 202-606-7506 or by email at egrantshelp@cns.gov .
- Use only uppercase letters for all section headings and other information you would like to highlight in your narrative. Bold face, bullets, underlines, or other types of formatting, charts, diagrams, and tables will not copy into eGrants. Do not use any of these in your application.
- Adhere to all the character limits indicated in the application instructions. Characters include all the letters, punctuation, and spaces in your document. Your word processing software can provide a character count.

Paper Applications: In the event that you are unable to submit in eGrants, you may submit a paper application to the Governor's Commission on Community Service, following these instructions:
- Notify the Governor's Commission on Community Service that you will be submitting a paper application.
- Type and double-space the application in Times New Roman, 12-point font size with one-inch margins.
- Adhere to the character limits listed in the application instructions and number the pages.
- Submit one unbound, single-sided original paper application and three unbound single sided copies of the complete applications. Faxed or emailed versions of your application will not be accepted.
- With your paper application, please include, in hard copy, a brief paragraph which describes the technical issues that prevented you from submitting in eGrants.
- The same deadline applies for paper applications.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation criteria and their percentage weights are as follows:

Program Design   **50%**
Rationale and Approach – 10%
Member Outputs and Outcomes – 20%
Community Outputs and Outcomes – 20%

Organizational Capability   **25%**
No sub-categories

Budget/Cost Effectiveness/Budget Adequacy   **25%**
Cost Effectiveness – 15%
Budget Adequacy – 10%

The completed application package consists of nine components that must be submitted to the Governor's Commission on Community Service via eGrants in the order listed below. Instructions for each component of the application follow. Please read through each instruction component thoroughly and address each component in its entirety.

      I.   **SF424 Facesheet**
      II.   **Program Model, Design, Location and Focus**
      III.   **Narrative**
      IV.   **Service Categories**
      V.   **Performance Measurements**
      VI.   **Budget**
      VII.   **Additional Required Information**
      VIII.   **Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants**
      IX.   **Authorization, Assurances and Certifications**

Appendixes

APPENDIX A: Facesheet Instructions (eGrants "Applicant" and "Application" sections)
APPENDIX B: Program Model and Design (Application Section)
APPENDIX C: Service Categories
APPENDIX D: Performance Measurement Worksheet
APPENDIX E: Budget Instructions
APPENDIX F: Budget Worksheet
APPENDIX G: Budget Instructions for the Education Award Programs
APPENDIX H: Budget Worksheet for the Education Award Programs
APPENDIX I: Budget Analysis Checklist
APPENDIX J: Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants
APPENDIX K: Assurances and Certifications
APPENDIX L: Beale Codes and County-Level Economic Data

Application instructions

The information in parentheses in the headings, below, corresponds to the eGrants section where you will input the requested information.

I. SF424 Facesheet (Applicant and Application Information Section)

In eGrants, complete the Applicant and Application Information sections. For paper applications, please see the instructions in Appendix A.

II. Program Model, Design, Location and Focus (Application Section)

In eGrants, complete the Program Model and Design section in the Application Section. This section is particularly important for Corporation data collection and evaluation. Please take the time to reflect your primary program activities accurately in this section. For paper applications, please see the instructions in Appendix B.

III. Narrative (Narrative Section)

In this section, you will make the case that you have a well-designed program plan with a clear and compelling justification for the requested funds. Your narrative should cover the three-year program period for which you are requesting funds.

As you complete each section of the narrative, you must stay within the character limits specified in the table below.

Narrative Item	Maximum Number of Characters (including spaces and punctuation)
A. Executive Summary	4,000 characters
B. Summary of Accomplishments and Outcomes (if applicable)	8,000 characters

C. Program Design (50%)
   1) Rationale and Approach (10%)
   2) Member Outputs and Outcomes (20%)
   3) Community Outputs and Outcomes (20%)
 	
D. Organizational Capability (25%)
 	
E. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25%)
   1) Cost Effectiveness (15%)
   2) Budget Adequacy (10%)
	71,000 characters for Sections C, D, and E combined
	
	Important Note: In eGrants, enter text for C, D and E into the fields for Rationale and Approach, Member Outputs and Outcomes, Community Outputs and Outcomes, Organizational Capability, and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy. Each of these fields has a 32,000 character limit. This allows for some flexibility in how you split your narrative between these fields. You may not exceed 71,000 characters in total for Sections C, D and E combined.

Total Maximum Number of Characters per Application	**83,000**

A. Executive Summary

Provide a concise overview of your proposed program that summarizes the purpose, need, planned service activities to address the need, anticipated outcomes, and how you will measure these outcomes. Please include your organization's mission statement. If you are requesting a waiver from the requirement that you recruit or support volunteers or for use of the alternative matching process, please note that you are doing so here.

B. Summary of Accomplishments and Outcomes

1. **If your organization currently receives AmeriCorps funds,** provide a clear description of the accomplishments, outputs, and outcomes you have achieved to date in relation to your AmeriCorps performance measures for the current grant period.
2. **If you have received other Corporation program funds of any type within the past three years**, list the amounts you have received from each Corporation program.

C. Program Design

The following sections include elements that will contribute to your successful response to the criteria as articulated in the AmeriCorps regulations. Although they are closely based on the criteria articulated in the AmeriCorps regulations, they are not to be confused with the criteria themselves. The criteria can be found in AmeriCorps regulations, 45 C.F.R. §§ 2522.420 – 2522.448, along with additional information about what reviewers will assess within each category. We strongly suggest that you review the regulations, guidance, and these instructions before preparing your narrative.

1. **Rationale and Approach**
  a) **Compelling Community Need:**
  - Describe a compelling community need that you will address within the target community.
  - Include a description of how you identified the need and where it is documented.
  - If your program will operate at multiple sites, demonstrate a compelling need in each community you propose to serve.
  b) **Description of Activities and Member Roles:**
  - Provide a detailed description of the activities you propose to address the need.
  - Describe members' roles in these activities and how they relate to addressing the need.
  - Explain your program structure including where members will serve (for example, at the applicant organization or at local service sites).
  - Explain how the types of member slots you are requesting (for example, full-time, half-time, quarter-time, etc.) align with the program design and activities.
  - Describe how you will ensure member compliance with rules on prohibited service activities, including how members will be informed of prohibited activities and monitored for compliance by program staff. See 45 C.F.R. § 2520.65 for a list of prohibited service activities.
  c) **Measurable Outputs and Outcomes:**
  - Describe the measurable outputs and outcomes you expect to achieve as a result of your activities.
  - **Note**: In Section V. Performance Measures, you will develop your measurable outputs and outcomes in more detail, including how they will be measured, your targets for each year, and the data you will gather.
  d) **Plan for Self-Assessment and Improvement:**
  - Describe your plans for tracking and evaluating progress toward meeting and achieving your performance measures.
  - Provide plans for continuous program improvement, such as how you will identify strengths and weaknesses, resolve problems, and gather feedback from and provide feedback to members, service sites, and partners.
  e) **Community Involvement:**
  - Describe how you involved the target community (or target communities) in identifying the needs and the planning process. Be specific in explaining which community partners and stakeholders were involved, what roles they played, and what their responsibilities were.
  - Explain how you will continue to engage your community partners and stakeholders throughout the three year program period. Be specific in describing their roles and responsibilities.
  f) **Relationship to other National and Community Service Programs:** Describe the extent to which your program builds on (without duplicating), or reflects collaboration with, other national and community service programs supported by the Corporation.
  g) **Potential for Replication:**
  - Describe the extent to which your program is designed to be replicated.
  - Discuss any plans or strategies for replication.

2. **Member Outputs and Outcomes**
  a) **Member Recruitment and Recognition:**
  - Describe in detail your plans for recruiting members for your program.
  - Describe the criteria you will use to select your members, including specific qualifications, characteristics, or backgrounds.
  - Describe how you will actively seek a corps that is diverse and that includes members from the communities to be served.

- Explain how you will reward members for their service and how you will demonstrate members' satisfaction with their service.
- Describe your plan for providing incentives to members such as opportunities for skill-building and professional development, educational opportunity or benefit, promoting esprit de corps, and recognizing members' achievements.
- Discuss how you will retain members in your program and promote their successful completion of a full term of service.
- **Tutoring programs only**: Describe how your strategy for recruiting and selecting members complies with AmeriCorps requirements for member tutoring qualifications. See 45 C.F.R. §§2522.900-2522.930.

b) **Member Development, Training and Supervision:**
- Describe in detail your plans for orienting members to AmeriCorps, the community, their placement site, and to the service they will perform.
- Describe in detail how you will adequately train members to perform all the activities they will engage in and, as necessary, provide them with ongoing training throughout their terms.
- Provide a general timeline for training and identify the training curricula and materials you will use.
- Describe a member supervision plan that ensures members will receive adequate support and guidance throughout their terms.
- **Tutoring programs only**: Describe how your strategy for training members complies with AmeriCorps requirements for member tutor training. See 45 C.F.R. §§ 2522.940 – 2522.950.

c) **Ethic of Service and Civic Responsibility:** Demonstrate how you will incorporate training and service-learning activities that include structured opportunities for participants to reflect on and learn from their service in order to promote a lifelong ethic of service and civic responsibility.

d) **Member Enrollment and Retention:**
- **Current grantees only:** AmeriCorps will review your enrollment and retention rates (in percentages) on an annual basis.
- Provide an explanation if your enrollment and retention rates are below the rates specified in the guidance and describe your plans for improving these rates.

e) **Measurable Outputs and Outcomes: Current grantees only**, describe your success in meeting performance measures for AmeriCorps members, if you have them, including any applicable AmeriCorps national performance measures articulated in the guidance, and including outputs and outcomes.

3. **Community Outputs and Outcomes**
a) **Community Impact:**
- Describe the extent to which your program is meeting targeted, compelling community needs, OR Current grantees only, discuss the extent to which your program:
- Has met community-based performance measures, including any applicable national performance measures, and outputs and outcomes in previous grants cycles (including progress to date in the current grant cycle and, if applicable, previous awards), and
- Is continually expanding and increasing its reach and impact in the community.

b) **Sustainability:**
- Outline your plans for ensuring that the impact of your program in the community is sustainable beyond the presence of federal support.
- For example, you might describe how your community relationships will lead to community investment in the program's continued operation; how you will diversify your funding sources to include a wide range of stakeholders (such as state, local, and private sector funding); how your strategies for recruiting and supporting volunteers will sustain member activities after your AmeriCorps grant ends; or how the community will maintain your project once it is complete.
- The Corporation recognizes that Education Award Programs are clear examples of sustainable programs from a financial perspective. In evaluating Education Award Only applications in the selection process, we will consider the extent to which your program demonstrates sustainability with components such as descriptions of the sustainable impact in the community or indicators that members continue to show an ethic of service after serving in AmeriCorps.

c) **Volunteer Recruitment and Support**
- Describe how your program will use volunteers to expand the reach of the program in the community.
- Include in this description a discussion of how you will recruit, support, and recognize volunteers.

- Identify how many volunteers you expect to recruit and the number of hours of service they will provide, in total and on average. Also discuss if your volunteers will be episodic (committing to one-time or occasional events) or ongoing (committing to a regular, ongoing role in the program). If selected for funding, you will be expected to report on your actual volunteer recruitment levels.
- Describe the role that members will play in your volunteer recruitment and support efforts.
- **If you are requesting a waiver of the requirement to recruit or support volunteers** (see 45 C.F.R. § 2520.35), state your request in the Executive Summary and explain the basis for your request in the fields provided in eGrants. If you are submitting a paper application, explain the basis for your waiver request in the program narrative.
- Your state commission must approve your request for a waiver of the volunteer requirement before it is forwarded to the Corporation.

d) Capacity Building:
- Describe how your program will enhance the capacity of your organization, service sites, and, as applicable, other organizations and institutions important to the community, such as schools, homeland security organizations, neighborhood watch organizations, civic associations, and community organizations, including faith-based organizations.
- Explain members' roles in your capacity-building activities.

D. Organizational Capability
1. Sound Organizational Structure
a) Ability to Provide Sound Programmatic and Fiscal Oversight:
- Provide a brief history of your organization and the year your organization was established.
- Describe your organization's experience in the proposed areas of activity and your experience operating and overseeing a program comparable to the one proposed. Include specific examples of your prior accomplishments and outcomes.
- Describe your capacity to manage a federal grant and to provide on site monitoring of the financial and other systems required to administer an AmeriCorps grant.
- Explain how receiving an AmeriCorps grant will add value to any existing service activities you perform in these areas.
- **If you are proposing a multi-site program or statewide initiative model**:
  o Explain how you are able to support and oversee service sites.
  o Describe your process for selecting service sites and ensuring they have adequate programmatic and financial capabilities. Include information about how your site selection process incorporates the criteria required by AmeriCorps Regulations. See 45 C.F.R. § 2522.475.
  o Describe your current or previous programmatic and funding relationships with the sites.
  o Describe your plans for monitoring sites' compliance with fiscal and programmatic requirements.
  o Discuss how you will develop connections among the sites through common program elements or activities to ensure that your overall mission and vision for the AmeriCorps program is maintained at each site.

b) Board of Directors, Administrators, and Staff:
- Describe your organization's management and staff structure and how the board of directors (if applicable), administrators, and staff members will be used to support your program.
- Identify the key program and fiscal positions responsible for your proposed program. Describe the background and experience of key staff members, or your plans to recruit, select, train, and support additional staff if necessary.

c) Plan for Self-Assessment or Improvement: Describe how your organization undertakes ongoing assessment and improvement of its systems, structure, staffing, and other capacities to ensure that it remains sound and well managed.

d) Plan for Effective Technical Assistance:
- Demonstrate how you are able to provide or secure any needed financial and programmatic technical assistance for your program, and if applicable, your service sites.
- Describe plans for providing financial and programmatic orientation, training and technical assistance to your program and service sites.
- Explain how you will identify and respond to your programs' and, if applicable, your service sites' ongoing training and technical assistance needs.

2. **Sound Record of Accomplishment as an Organization**
   a) **Volunteer Generation and Support:** Describe how your organization recruits and supports a diverse group of volunteers to increase your own organizational capacity (as distinguished from how you use volunteers to expand the reach of the program in the community).
   b) **Organizational and Community Leadership:**
- Provide examples of how you have demonstrated leadership as an organization and in the community you serve.
- For example, describe awards received by the organization or individuals within the organization, public positions of leadership such as staff serving on other community boards, or participation in community events, task forces, and other community activities.

   c) **Success in Securing Match Resources: Current grantees only**, describe your successes and challenges in securing match resources for prior grant awards, including the current grant cycle and, if applicable, previous awards.

3. **Success in Securing Community Support that Recurs, Expands in Scope, Increases in Amount, and is More Diverse**
   a) **Collaboration:**
- Describe any collaborations you have developed that increase the quality and reach of services you provide.
- Discuss the roles that community organizations, including faith-based organizations, play in these collaborations.

   b) **Local Financial and In-kind Contributions:** Discuss examples of how such contributions have continued over time, expanded in scope, increased in amount, or become more diverse.
   c) **Wide Range of Community Stakeholders:**
- Describe the various types of community stakeholders in your organization.
- Discuss examples of how non-financial support from your community stakeholders has continued over time, expanded in scope, increased in amount, or become more diverse.

   d) **Special Circumstances**:
- In applying the organizational capability criteria to each proposal, reviewers may also take into account the following circumstances of individual organizations:
- The age of your organization and its rate of growth; and
- Whether your organization serves a resource-poor community, such as a rural or remote community, a community with a high poverty rate, or a community with a scarcity of philanthropic and corporate resources.
- If you feel that any of these circumstances have an impact on your organizational capability that has not already been discussed, please describe it.

E. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
1. **Cost Effectiveness**
   a) **Corporation Cost per Member Service Year (MSY):**
- Your Corporation cost per MSY is determined by dividing the Corporation's share of budgeted grant costs by the number of member service years you are requesting in your grant.
- One MSY is equivalent to 1700 service hours.

   b) **Diverse Non-Federal Support:**
- Demonstrate how your program has or will obtain diverse non-federal resources for program implementation and sustainability.
- Include a discussion of the non-Corporation resource commitments (in-kind and cash) that you have obtained, the additional commitments you plan to secure, and how you will secure them. In the budget, you must list the sources of your match funds.

   c) **Decreased Reliance on Federal Support: Current grantees only**, describe the extent to which you are increasing your share of costs to meet or exceed program goals, or the extent to which you are proposing deeper impact or broader reach without a commensurate increase in federal costs.

2. **Budget Adequacy**
   a) Discuss the adequacy of your budget to support your program design including how it is sufficient to support your program activities and is linked to your desired outputs and outcomes.

b) Describe the costs you expect to incur for this program that will not be covered by Corporation funding. These costs might include staff salaries and benefits, travel, evaluation, living allowances or salaries for AmeriCorps members, supplies, and equipment. You will not be required to track or report on these expenditures. We will consider this information to assess the adequacy of your budget to support your program design.

** The Corporation cost per MSY and the extent to which a current Education Award Program (EAP) grantee is increasing its share of costs to meet or exceed programs goals will not be considered in assessing an EAP applicant's cost effectiveness. However, all the other indicators described in this section will apply and the cost effectiveness/budget adequacy section still equals 25% of the selection criteria.

In applying the cost effectiveness criteria to each proposal, reviewers may take into account the following circumstances of individual programs:
- Program age, or the extent to which your program brings on new sites;
- Whether your program or project is located in a resource-poor community, such as a rural or remote community, a community with a high poverty rate, or a community with a scarcity of corporate or philanthropic resources;
- Whether your program or project is located in a high-cost, or economically distressed community, measured by applying appropriate federal and state data; and
- Whether reasonable and necessary costs of your program or project are higher because they are associated with engaging or serving difficult-to-reach populations, or achieving greater program impact as evidenced through performance measures and program evaluation.

Please describe how any of these circumstances—not previously discussed—have had an impact on your program's cost effectiveness.

IV.   Service Categories (Performance Measures Section)
In eGrants, the service categories are located in the Performance Measures section. Please select the three service categories that best represent your most significant areas of program activity. See Appendix C.

V.   Performance Measures (Performance Measures Section)
Before you complete Section V. Performance Measures, please review 45 C.F.R. §§ 2522.500 – 2522.650.

The worksheet in Appendix D is provided as a tool to help you think through the development of your performance measures and assemble the information you will need to input into eGrants. For example, to create one set of aligned performance measures you would complete three worksheets—one for an output, one for an intermediate outcome and one for an end outcome. When completing the performance measures fields in eGrants, you must enter text into every text field. You may also find the Performance Measurement Toolkit on the Corporation's website, www.americorps.gov, to be helpful in creating your performance measures. Included full set of own sheets for both service area and member development.

VI.   Budget (Budget Section)

A. Preparing Your Budget
Applicants to the Education Award Program may only request a fixed amount of funding per member service year (MSY). Therefore, you do not complete a detailed budget. Follow the instructions in Appendix G to prepare your budget. Your budget worksheet can be found in Appendix H. Applicants for Education Award Program grants can request up to $400 per member service year (MSY) member to offset cost of program operations. The matching requirements DO NOT apply to Education Award Program applicants. EGrants will create the budget automatically from the detailed budget information you enter. In addition, the National Service Trust will hold Education Awards for members who successfully complete a term of service with the program.

VII.   Additional Required Information (Documents Section)
In addition to your application submitted in eGrants, you are required to provide the information described below as part of your application.

A. Program Evaluation
Please review 45 C.F.R. §§ 2522.500 – 2522.540, and §§ 2522.700 – 2522.740.

Education Award Program grantees are not required to perform an independent evaluation of their program. However, they are required to perform an internal program evaluation and submit that evaluation along with the appropriate recompeting application.

B. Financial Audit/Information
Applicants for new funding must provide their most recent A-133 audit, their organization's financial audit, or other financial statements if they have not had a formal audit.

C. Promoting Higher Education Service
This section applies only to Higher Education Institutions. See 45 C.F.R. § 2522.450(b)(6).
1) In your narrative, describe your institution's current efforts and plans to further   support community service through Federal Work Study.
2) In your narrative, describe your efforts to promote and expand college student and/ or staff service, and to collaborate with campus community service offices and activities. AmeriCorps will also review your Federal Work Study data.

D. Labor Union Concurrence
If a program applicant proposes to also serve as the service sponsor, the application must include the written concurrence of any local labor organization representing employees of the service sponsor who are engaged in the same or substantially similar work as that proposed to be carried out. "Program applicant" includes any applicant to the Corporation or the State Commission, as well as any entity applying for assistance or approved national service positions through a grant program conducted using AmeriCorps assistance through a Corporation grantee or subgrantee.

E. Submission Instructions for Program Evaluations and Audits
1) Your program evaluation and audit information must be submitted to your State Commission by the application deadline.
2) When submitting this information, please attach a hard copy of your SF424 facesheet to the front of the documents so that we can connect it to the appropriate application.
3) In eGrants, you must change the status of the evaluation and audit documents from the default "Not Sent" to the applicable status (Sent, Not Applicable, or Already on File at CNCS).

VIII.   Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants
The Corporation and other federal agencies are collaborating with the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (FBCI) to conduct a survey of organizations that apply for federal funding. The purpose of this voluntary information collection is to compile statistics on the types of organizations that apply to the Corporation for funds, such as number of employees, budget size, and self-identification as a faith-based/religious organization or a non-religious community-based organization.

This form is for applicants that are nonprofit private organizations (not including private universities). All information from the attached survey will be confidential and the responses will be aggregated in-house for a summary report.   Information provided on your form will not be released and will not be considered in any way in making funding decisions.

There are two ways to complete the survey: (1) while preparing your application; and (2) after submitting your application.
1) To complete the survey while preparing your application, go to the eGrants Main Menu, click on Enter Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity, provide the requested information and submit.
2) If you submit your grant application without completing the survey, a pop-up box will appear and ask you if you would like to complete the survey. You may select Yes, No, or Remind Me Later. If you select "Remind Me Later," you will be asked to fill in the survey next time you attempt to submit an application to the Corporation for National and Community Service.